

(21) **INCOMING TELEGRAM** *Department of State* *Pol 23-9 Greece* *(116)*

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Action

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Info

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1967 APR 26 PM 1 20

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R 261750Z APR 67

GPM

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC

SC

INFC RUHQGU/AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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RUQMAT/AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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RUFJER/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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RUDSC/AMEMBASSY LONDON

NEA

RUFJC/AMEMBASSY PARIS

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RUFRC/USDOCOSOUTH

USIA

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JOINT EMBASSY/USIS MESSAGE

SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION: GREEK MILITARY COUP

1. ITALIAN PRESS APRIL 22-26 HAS CONTINUOUSLY GIVEN FRONT PAGE PROMINENCE TO GREEK MILITARY COUP. NON/EXTREMIST PAPERS HAVE EXHIBITED GREAT CONCERN OVER EVENTS, NOT ONLY FOR FUTURE OF GREEK DEMOCRACY, BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE UNFORTUNATE REPERCUSSIONS OF COUP ON NATO, CYPRUS AND EUROPEAN SECURITY IN MEDITERRANEAN.

2. APRIL 22 PRESS GENERALLY ATTRIBUTED JOINT RESPONSIBILITY FOR COUP TO KING AND ARMY. SOCIALIST /AVANTI'S/ HEADLINES WERE

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TYPICAL: "MILITARY DICTATORSHIP IN GREECE-- KING AND ARMY HAVE ASSUMED FULL POWERS IN COUP D'ETAT".

3. PRESS OF FOLLOWING DAY BEGAN TO SPECULATE ON KING'S ROLE IN COUP. INDEPENDENT /CORRIERE DELLA SERA/ ASKED "WAS KING THE INSPIRER OR VICTIM OF COUP?"

4. BY APRIL 24 MOST NEWSPAPERS WERE REPORTING THAT KING WAS CAUGHT BY SURPRISE BY EVENTS, THAT HE WAS UNDER SURVEILLANCE AND THAT HIS MOVEMENTS WERE CONTROLLED BY ARMY OFFICERS.

5. APRIL 26 PRESS SPECULATED AS TO WHETHER KING WOULD "LEGALIZE THE PUTSCH" (AS CENTER /IL MESSAGGERO/ PUT IT), NOTING THAT HE HAD NOT YET MADE PUBLIC STATEMENTS INDICATING HIS POSITION.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/11	
REVIEWED BY <i>WJ</i>	DATE <i>8 MAY 1982</i>
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--2- ROME 5659, 4/26/67.

PAPERS ALSO REPORTED CONTACTS OF US AND UK AMBASSADORS WITH KING, AND SAID "DEPARTMENT OF STATE ON APRIL 25 THREATENED TO RE-EXAMINE VAST AMERICAN MILITARY AID PROGRAM IF MILITARY JUNTA DID NOT RAPIDLY DEMONSTRATE WILLINGNESS TO CEDE POWER TO A DEMOCRATIC REGIME." /MESSAGGERO/ SAID DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENT WAS UNOFFICIALLY EXPLAINED AS ATTEMPT TO REINFORCE KING'S POSITION IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH MILITARY AUTHORITIES. PAPER ADDED THAT AMBASSADOR TALBOT HAD INSTRUCTIONS TO MAKE CONTACT WITH GREEK MILITARY TO WARN THAT INSTALLATION OF DICTATORIAL REGIME WOULD BE CONSIDERED "INTOLERABLE" BY AMERICAN PEOPLE.

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6. EDITORIAL COMMENT HAS BEEN GENERALLY IN LINE WITH POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF NEWSPAPERS, WITH CENTER-LEFT, REPUBLICAN AND INDEPENDENT PRESS DEPLORING MILITARY TAKEOVER. ENRICO MATTEI, IN FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL APPEARING IN CONSERVATIVE /LA NAZIONE/ ON APRIL 23, DECLARED HIS FIRM OPPOSITION TO MILITARY DICTATORSHIP, BUT INDIGNANTLY REJECTED AS "COMPANIONS IN PROTEST" THE ITALIAN COMMUNISTS.... THOSE "WORSHIPPERS OF DICTATORSHIP", WHO ARE ONLY INTENT ON EXPLOITING INSTINCTIVE REACTION OF ITALIANS AGAINST EVENTS IN GREECE. STAUNCH ANTI-COMMUNIST UGO D'-ANDREA, WRITING IN CONSERVATIVE /IL TEMPO/ (OFTEN TO THE RIGHT OF /NAZIONE/ ON APRIL 23, SEEMED TO EXCUSE ACTIONS OF GREEK MILITARY WHEN VIEWED IN FRAMEWORK OF MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY, I.E. DESPITE PRESENCE 6TH FLEET, SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE WITH ALLY IN YUGOSLAVIA AND "SUBORDINATION OF EGYPT AND ALGERIA" PRESENTS CONTINUOUS AND GROWING THREAT.

7. CENTER-LEFT /LA STAMPA/ ON APRIL 25 AND /AVANTI/ ON APRIL 26 DEMONSTRATED CERTAIN CYNICISM RE KING'S TRUE SENTIMENTS. /STAMPA/ SAID "KING WANTED COUP, BUT HE DIDN'T ENGINEER IT". /AVANTI/ SAID KING MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO /DEMONSTRATE TO

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AMERICANS THAT HE IS 'CONDITIONING' THE EXTREMIST MILITARY". /AVANTI/ ALSO CRITICIZED US FOR "SUSPENDING VOICE OF AMERICA TRANSMISSIONS WHICH WERE REPORTING WORLD PRESS COMMENTS HOSTILE TO MILITARY COUP---AN ACT (VIZ.SUSPENSION) NOT DISPLEASING TO GREEK MILITARY IN POWER.

THIS RATHER AMBIGUOUS ATTITUDE OF US WILL NOT FAIL TO CAUSE PERPLEXITY".

8. COMMUNIST PRESS HAS HAD A FIELD DAY, REPORTING CONCENTRATION CAMPS, DEPORTATIONS, MILITARY POLICE ABUSES, ETC.

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